

Minutes of the Planning Commission Regular Meeting of Thursday, July 18, 2017
Council Chambers, One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, CA

ROLL CALL 7:00 P.M.

Planning Commissioners Present: Majeski, Meola, Goldfarb, McCune, Simpson, Hendrix

Planning Commissioners Absent: Mates

Staff Present: Community Development Director de Melo, City Attorney Rennie, Senior Planner Gill, Assistant Planner Dietz, Temporary Administrative Assistant Hernandez.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Vice Chair Goldfarb

COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments)

No requests to speak received.

COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / AGENDA AMENDMENTS

City Council Meeting of August 22, 2017 - Commission Liaison is Commission Chair Mates, Alternate Commissioner Goldfarb.

CONSENT CALENDAR

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2417 Coronet Boulevard - Single Family Design Review to construct a new 3,364 square foot single-family residence for the site (3,500 sq. ft. maximum building size permitted). The project also includes a Permanent Encroachment Permit for retaining walls, guardrail, and entry steps within the public right of way in association with the proposed required sidewalk construction for the home. Appl. No. PA2016-0043.

Senior Planner Gill outlined the staff report regarding the project.

Commissioner Goldfarb polled the Commission for ex-parte communication regarding the project; Commissioners indicated that site visits were made but no ex-parte communications were made.

Discussion ensued regarding the tree and sidewalk improvements. Senior Planner Gill stated building a sidewalk is a requirement of the city code, and the applicant has talked to the Public Works Department extensively regarding the sidewalk.

Discussion ensued regarding the sidewalk requirement. City Attorney Rennie stated that should an exception be sought, an application must be made to the Public Works Department with a basis for not constructing the improvements.

Bahram Mozayeny, Project Engineer stated that the project design has been in design mode for almost a year and that the current plan meets all requirements. The project had many challenges, including a

downhill slope, steps, retaining walls, etc. He stated that the neighborhood liked the subject tree and that the applicant is building the sidewalk around the tree to preserve it and to comply with Public Works guidelines and ADA compliance.

Vice Chair Goldfarb opened the Public Hearing, no one came forward to speak.

Vice Chair Goldfarb moved to close the Public Hearing.

Commission deliberation on the item yielded project support, however, direction was given to have staff work with the Public Works Department on the sidewalk issue.

ACTION: On a Motion by Commissioner McCune, Seconded by Commissioner Majeski Approving a Single-Family Design Review at 2417 Coronet Boulevard (Appl. No. PA2016-0043).

Passed 6/0/1 (Mates absent)

Resolution 2017-23

2417 Coronet Boulevard – Resolution of the Planning Commission Recommending City Council Approval of Retaining Walls, Guard Rail and Steps Within the Public Right-of-Way. (Appl. No. PA2016-0043).

ACTION: On a Motion by Commissioner McCune, Seconded by Commissioner Hendrix to Recommend City Council Approval of a Permanent Encroachment Permit for retaining walls, guardrail, and entry steps within the public right-of-way in association with the proposed required sidewalk construction for 2417 Coronet Boulevard (Appl. No. PA2016-0043).

Passed 5/1/1 (Simpson No, Mates absent)

Resolution 2017-24

Community Development Director de Melo stated that the item can be appealed to the City Council within 10 calendar days.

2820 Ponce Avenue (Serendipity School) - Conditional Use Permit to amend the Site Utilization Plan to construct a new 4,809 square foot building, minor exterior renovations to the existing building, and various site improvements. The project does not propose to increase the total student capacity or number of employees. (Appl. No. PA20170620).

Vice Chair Goldfarb polled the Commission for ex-parte communications regarding the project; Commissioners indicated that site visits were made but no ex-parte communications were made.

Commissioner Hendrix recused himself from the hearing based on a proximity conflict and stepped off the dais and exited the chambers.

Assistant Planner Dietz outlined the staff report regarding the project.

No increase in traffic generated by the site is anticipated, and the project is consistent with the original intent of the Site Utilization Plan, which is to provide a neighborhood school.

Community Development Director de Melo stated that the Planning Commission's role tonight is in a recommending capacity to the City Council. There are two entitlements before the Commission tonight, the Conditional Use Permit and Design Review; a tree removal permit and grading plan review will be presented to the Commission at a later date. The Site Utilization Plan and the Conditional Use Permit is subject to Council approval.

Seamus O'Connor, BCA Architects, project applicant, spoke and stated that there will be no additional student enrollment and no new faculty for the project. The new buildings are modular and 90% of building construction is being completed off-site. The goal of the improvements is to provide the students with better facilities and promote campus safety. The parking lot will be paved and striped, providing safety to the students.

Vice Chair Goldfarb opened the Public Hearing.

Kay Harrison, Belmont Resident, spoke and expressed her opposition to the project. Her concern was traffic, access for emergency vehicles and additional cars parking in the street due to construction. She wants a neighborhood not a thoroughfare.

John Chuang, Belmont Resident, spoke and expressed his opposition to the project. He questioned the financial motivation of the expansion; the intent is to keep the enrollment the same but what are the longer-term plans of increasing enrollment. The school is on a dead-end street, and he would like a mitigation plan in place for emergency vehicles trying to access the area.

Chandrani Uhowdhury, Belmont Resident, spoke and expressed her opposition to the project. Her concern was increase in traffic. Infrastructure needs will bring in additional vehicles and traffic. There is no ingress for emergency vehicles. She expressed concern regarding potential storm water runoff from the trees being removed.

Mr. Vingralek, Belmont resident, has no major concerns except issues with the storm water runoff. If there is a new drainage system put in place, he would like to see it go to the street and not onto his property.

Vice Chair Goldfarb closed the Public Hearing.

Commission deliberation on the item yielded project support.

Community Development Director deMelo stated that the project was reviewed by several departments in the city, including police and fire and no issues were noted.

ACTION: On a Motion by Commissioner McCune, Seconded by Commissioner Majeski Recommending City Council Approval of a Conditional Use Permit to Amend the Site Utilization Plan and Design Review at 2820 Ponce Avenue (appl. No. 2017-0019).

Passed 5/1/1 (Hendrix recused, Mates absent)

Resolution 2017-25

OTHER BUSINESS / UPDATES

The August 1st meeting was rescheduled due to the National Night Out event, and the August 3rd meeting was canceled. The August 15th Commission meeting is scheduled to facilitate oral comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the 2035 General Plan Update, the Belmont Village Specific Plan, and the Climate Action Plan Project. The DEIR public comment period closes on August 18, 2017 for this comprehensive project. An early theme of comments we have received thus far have been about jobs/housing balance.

City Attorney Rennie stated Complete Streets needs to be incorporated into the plan to address different modes of travel within the city.

The City Council meeting of July 25, 2017 and August 8, 2017 have been canceled, and the next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday August 22, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT: to a regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on August 15, 2017, at this time being 8:36 P.M.

Prepared by,
Irma Hernandez
Temporary Administrative Assistant

Meeting televised and web streamed.